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(A155, R170, H3919)

**AN ACT TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING SECTION 59-18-325 SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT ALL STUDENTS ENTERING THE ELEVENTH GRADE FOR THE FIRST TIME IN SCHOOL YEAR 2014-2015 AND SUBSEQUENT YEARS MUST BE ADMINISTERED A COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS ASSESSMENT AND A WORKKEYS ASSESSMENT, AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE ACCEPTABLE USES OF THESE ASSESSMENTS RESULTS; TO AMEND SECTION 59-18-310, AS AMENDED, RELATING TO THE EXIT EXAM REQUIRED FOR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION, SO AS TO ELIMINATE THIS REQUIREMENT FOR STUDENTS BEGINNING WITH THE GRADUATING CLASS OF 2015, TO PROVIDE PROCEDURES THAT FORMER PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO DID NOT GRADUATE OR RECEIVE A DIPLOMA SOLELY FOR FAILING THIS EXIT EXAM MAY PETITION BY JANUARY 31, 2015 TO OBTAIN A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA, TO REQUIRE THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO ADVERTISE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS PETITION PROCESS TO THE PUBLIC IN A CERTAIN MANNER, TO PROVIDE RELATED REPORTING REQUIREMENTS OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND THE DEPARTMENT, AND TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT TO REMOVE ANY CONFLICTING REQUIREMENTS AND PROMULGATE REGULATIONS WITH CONFORMING CHANGES; TO AMEND SECTION 59-18-950, RELATING TO PUBLIC SCHOOL AND PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT REPORT CARDS, SECTION 59-48-35, RELATING TO THE GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL FOR SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS, AND SECTION 59-139-60, RELATING TO ASSESSMENTS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD ACADEMIC ASSISTANCE, ALL SO AS TO MAKE CONFORMING CHANGES.**

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

**High school exit exam eliminated**

SECTION 1. Section 59-18-310(B) of the 1976 Code, as last amended by Act 282 of 2008, is further amended to read:

“(B)(1) The statewide assessment program must include the subjects of English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies in grades three through eight, as delineated in Section 59-18-320(B), to be first administered in 2009, and end-of-course tests for gateway courses awarded units of credit in English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Student performance targets must be established following the 2009 administration. The assessment program must be used for school and school district accountability purposes beginning with the 2008-2009 school year. The publication of the annual school and school district report card may be delayed for the 2008-2009 school year until no later than February 15, 2010. A student’s score on an end-of-year assessment may not be the sole criterion for placing the student on academic probation, retaining the student in his current grade, or requiring the student to attend summer school. Beginning with the graduating class of 2010, students are required to pass a high school credit course in science and a course in United States history in which end-of-course examinations are administered to receive the state high school diploma. Beginning with the graduating class of 2015, students are no longer required to meet the exit examination requirements set forth in this section and State Regulation to earn a South Carolina high school diploma.

(2) A person who is no longer enrolled in a public school and who previously failed to receive a high school diploma or was denied graduation solely for failing to meet the exit exam requirements pursuant to Section 59-18-310(B) and State Regulation may petition the local school board to determine the student’s eligibility to receive a high school diploma pursuant to this chapter. The local school board will transmit diploma requests to the South Carolina Department of Education in accordance with department procedures. Petitions under this section must be submitted to the local school district by December 31, 2015. Students receiving diplomas in accordance with this section shall not be counted as graduates in the graduation rate calculations for affected schools and districts, either retroactively or in current or future calculations. On or before January 31, 2017, the South Carolina Department of Education shall report to the State Board of Education

and the General Assembly the number of diplomas granted, by school district, under the provision. The State Board of Education shall remove any conflicting requirement and promulgate conforming changes in its applicable regulations. The department shall advertise the provisions of this item in at least one daily newspaper of general circulation in the area of each school district within forty-five days after this enactment. At a minimum, this notice must consist of two columns measuring at least ten inches in length and measuring at least four and one-half inches in combined width, and include:

- (a) a headline printed in at least a twenty-four point font that is boldfaced;
- (b) an explanation of who qualifies for the petitioning option;
- (c) an explanation of the petition process;
- (d) a contact name and phone number; and
- (e) the deadline for submitting a petition.”

### **Governor’s School for Science and Math, conforming change**

SECTION 2. Section 59-48-35 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 59-48-35. The students enrolled in the Special School of Science and Mathematics who earn a total of twenty units of credit distributed as specified in the Defined Minimum Program for South Carolina school districts and who meet the school’s requirements for graduation are eligible to receive a state high school diploma. The board of the special school, in its discretion, may issue its own high school diploma.”

### **Early childhood academic assistance assessment, conforming change**

SECTION 3. Section 59-139-60 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 59-139-60. The State Board of Education, through the State Department of Education and in consultation with the Education Oversight Committee, shall establish an assessment system to evaluate the degree to which the purposes of this chapter are met. To that end, the State Board of Education, through the Department of Education shall:

- (1) develop or adapt a developmentally appropriate assessment program to be administered to all public school students by the end of grade three that is designed to measure a student’s strengths and weaknesses in skills required to perform academic work considered to

be at the fourth grade level. Information on each student's progress and on areas in need of improvement must be provided to the student's parent and fourth grade teacher. Aggregated information on student progress must be given to the students' kindergarten through third grade schools so that deficiencies in the schools' academic programs can be addressed;

(2) review the performance of students on the eighth grade basic skills assessment test pursuant to Section 59-30-10, or its equivalent, for progress in meeting the skill levels required by these examinations. Student data must be aggregated by the schools the students attended so that programs' deficiencies can be addressed;

(3) review the data on students overage for grade in each school at grades four and nine;

(4) monitor the performance of schools and districts so that continuing weaknesses in the programs preparing students for the fourth grade and ninth grade shall receive special assistance from the Department of Education; and

(5) propose other methods or measures for assessing how well the purposes of this chapter are met."

### **College and Career Readiness Assessment created**

SECTION 4. Article 3, Chapter 18, Title 59 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

"Section 59-18-325. (A) All students entering the eleventh grade for the first time in school year 2014-2015 and subsequent years must be administered a college and career readiness assessment as required by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act and by Title 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and that is from a provider secured by the department. In addition, all students entering the eleventh grade for the first time in school year 2014-2015 and subsequent years must be administered a WorkKeys assessment. The results of the assessments must be provided to each student, their respective schools, and to the State to:

(1) assist students, parents, teachers, and guidance counselors in developing individual graduation plans and in selecting courses aligned with each student's future ambitions;

(2) promote South Carolina's Work Ready Communities initiative; and

(3) meet federal and state accountability requirements.

(B) Students may subsequently use the results of these assessments to apply to college or to enter careers. The results must be added as part

of each student's permanent record and maintained at the department for at least ten years. The purpose of the results is to provide instructional information to assist students, parents, and teachers to plan for each student's course selection. This course selection might include remediation courses, dual-enrollment courses, advanced placement courses, internships, or other options during the remaining semesters in high school."

**School and school district report cards, conforming change**

SECTION 5. Section 59-18-950 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

"Section 59-18-950. Notwithstanding another provision of law to the contrary, the Education Oversight Committee may base ratings for school districts and high schools on criteria that include graduation rates and other criteria identified by technical experts and appropriate groups of educators and workforce advocates."

**Time effective**

SECTION 6. This act takes effect upon approval of the Governor except as otherwise provided.

Ratified the 10<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2014.

Approved the 14<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2014.

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